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quiring an easy and elegant style of handwriting, is that of adhering to a system; and they have adopted that of Mr. Wrifford, as the most simple and effectual one within their knowledge, and have recommended it to the public in the strongest terms of approbation.

Mr. Anson Wrifford, the author of the system in question, has been distinguished as an able and successful instructor in chirography for more than thirty years. The field of his labors may appear to many to be an humble one, as that of all instruction is too apt to be considered; but such an estimate can only be formed by those, who have never reflected on the application of this art to almost all the business of life. Mr. Wrifford began by directing his efforts to the attainment of practical results, by fixing the attention of the pupil on the formation of the various letters, separately, until the object was accomplished; instead of presenting him with a model in the form of a copy to be imitated, as a whole. This mode of instruction is so obviously in conformity with common sense, in the attainment of other arts, as well as this, that it seems almost ludicrous to regard it as peculiar to any individual; yet we are assured, by the Committee of the Chirographic Society, that the only mode of instruction which prevailed before the introduction of Mr. Wrifford's system, was the "course of random practice." However this may be, there can be no doubt that his system has been attended with entire success; and that it ought to be regarded with great favor by all who have at heart the interests of education. It is impossible to enter into a detailed account of it here, or to give an account of the various publications by which he has introduced it to general notice; but he is certainly entitled to high praise for the perseverance with which he has matured it, and the taste and judgment which have rendered it well worthy of the public favor.

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6. — *A Discourse on some of the Diseases of the Knee-joint; delivered before the Massachusetts Medical Society, at their Annual Meeting, May 31, 1837.* By GEORGE HAYWARD, M. D., Professor of the Principles of Surgery, and of Clinical Surgery in Harvard University, and Surgeon to the Massachusetts General Hospital; with an Appendix, containing the Proceedings of the Society, and of the Counsellors. Boston. 1837. 8vo. pp. 54.

THE occasion, on which this discourse was delivered, was one of great interest to the medical profession in this commonwealth.

An assemblage of more than two hundred physicians, many of whom have long since passed the period of their pupillage, and been long engaged in the weighty responsibilities, which the practice of medicine involves, were met to confer together on the means of promoting the respectability and usefulness of their cherished profession. It is one of the prominent objects of the meeting, to listen to a discourse on some medical subject. Neither the character of the audience, nor the occasion of meeting invite to any display of oratory; still less, to the indulgence of theoretic speculations. Both alike call for grave and mature discussion. With great propriety, therefore, the author addresses himself to the consideration of a subject of practical interest. There is no want of such topics in medical learning; in regard to which so much remains to be known, that the best informed in the profession will be the most ready to listen to the instructions of any one who is able to enlighten them. The habits of the author, as a teacher of Surgery, and as a Hospital Surgeon, naturally led him to surgical practice for the selection of his subject; and he has chosen one of great practical interest.

The diseases of the knee-joint occur often enough, to render it highly important that every practitioner of medicine should know how to manage them; and yet they are not of such frequent occurrence, as to make it easy for those who have no peculiar advantages for the study, fully to understand them. Their character, too, is both obscure and obstinate, insomuch, as our author remarks, that "regular practitioners are often led to abandon them altogether, and the patients are consigned to the hands of those who sometimes have more boldness than skill."

A full treatise on all the diseases of the knee would demand a much longer discussion, than there was opportunity for on this occasion. Dr. Hayward therefore selected a few of the most important, as the subject of his remarks. These are, 1st, *Inflammation of the Synovial Membrane*; 2d, *Morbid Change of Structure of the Synovial Membrane*; 3d, *Ulceration of the Cartilages*; and 4th, *Disease of the Articulating Surface of the Bones*. Our limits do not admit of an extended analysis. We can only say, that the discourse presents a concise, but clear and distinct description of each of these affections, with practical directions for their treatment, drawn from the best authorities, and especially from the author's personal observation. In the treatment, particularly, we are assured that nothing is recommended, which has not been suggested or confirmed by his own experience.

The Discourse is concluded with a short, but warm-hearted

tribute of respect to the members of the society who had deceased during the year.

"While there are many agreeable associations, connected with this occasion, it cannot fail, also, to bring with it feelings of a melancholy character. Every year takes from us some of our number; and that which has just drawn to a close has called to their final account several esteemed and respected members of our Society.

"Some of them had passed long lives with an honorable reputation; and, after having devoted themselves faithfully to the interests of humanity, were gathered, in a ripe old age, 'full of years and full of honors.'

"Others were in the vigor of manhood, rich in experience, active, faithful, and intelligent; diligently exerting the powers of their minds, and diffusing their stores of knowledge for the benefit of their fellow-men. In the midst of their usefulness, they were summoned, by an inscrutable Providence, at a moment when their lives seemed to be of the most value to the world. And others, again, were called away, when they were just entering on the great theatre of life, young, ardent, full of hope and promise; and thus were blasted in a moment the fond expectations of anxious friends. While we lament their loss, let us gratefully cherish their bright example, and honorable name." — p. 27.

We hardly need add, that the discourse does credit to the high standing of the author. It is well written, without any pretensions to fine writing; sensible and judicious; modestly performing all that it undertakes. It is not an ephemeral production, the interest of which ceases as soon as the occasion from which it arose has passed by, but is a permanent treatise, which will be a useful guide to the practitioner whenever he is called to relieve the diseases of which it treats.

The appendix gives a full account of all the proceedings of the Massachusetts Medical Society at the annual meeting, and of the Counsellors for the year preceding, so far as they are of any general interest. Such a publication is made every year. As all its transactions are thus made known to the public, it gives full opportunity to any one, who chooses, to ascertain how far the society really pursues its professed object of promoting the public welfare, by increasing the usefulness of the profession; and to what measures it resorts for this purpose. It would indeed be difficult to find any public body, of such a character and extent as this, that has conducted its affairs with a more just regard to the rights and feelings of all concerned, or that has more effectually promoted harmony and good fellowship in its own fraternity, or more honestly consulted the great interests of the community.